

‘Join in drive to put SWP candidates on NJ ballot!’

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

UNION CITY, N.J. — Socialist Workers Party campaigners are finding widespread interest in learning about a working-class road forward out of today’s capitalist economic and social crisis, and an alternative to the bosses’ twin parties, the Democrats and Republicans. They’ve knocked on doors and met workers and farmers as they collect signatures to put Joanne Kuniansky and Candace Wagner, the SWP’s candidates for governor and lieutenant governor of New Jersey, on the ballot.

Many are glad to hear that Kuniansky, a worker at Walmart, and Wagner, a worker on a freight railroad, are building solidarity with workers on strike today and putting forward a program to defend the interests of all working people against those of the bosses.

Campaign supporters collected 342 signatures in a dozen towns and cities over the April 10-12 weekend, bringing the total collected to 1,315. They

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Protests defy assaults by military junta in Myanmar

BY SETH GALINSKY

In its deadliest massacre since seizing power Feb. 1, the military junta in Myanmar killed more than 80 people in the southwestern city of Bago April 10, bringing the total killed since their coup to more than 700.

In a sign of the generals’ inability to stop the protests and stabilize their dictatorial rule, the next day protesters marched once more in Bago carrying a banner that said, “Spring Revolution. On strike.”

The junta’s forces had launched their attack before dawn, firing rocket propelled grenades and machine guns at protesters manning a sandbagged barricade. They also raided at least five Bago neighborhoods where daily protests have taken place.

The crackdown, strikes and protests have shut down significant parts of the economy. Many Chinese-owned garment shops were hit with arson attacks by unknown forces who blame Beijing for the coup. Over 100,000 workers have fled Yangon back to

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Solidarity with miners, steelworkers on strike!



Townsquare Media/Tessa Worley

Picket line in Brookwood, Alabama, of miners on strike against Warrior Met Coal. Miner Mike Wright told WVUA TV, “We basically want to let the company know: No contract, no coal.”

‘ATI is trying to bust our union,’ steelworkers say

BY TONY LANE

LOUISVILLE, Ohio — “They’re trying to break the union,” Dave Burgess told the *Militant* at the Allegheny Technologies Inc. plant here where close to 100 union steelworkers work. “The majority of ATI’s plants are nonunion today.” Company bosses announced in December plans to shut down their plant here in Louisville, as well as facilities in Waterbury, Connecticut, and the No. 3 Finishing Department at Brackenridge, Pennsylvania.

Some 1,300 members of the United Steelworkers are on strike at nine mills and other ATI facilities in five states. Most are in the greater Pittsburgh area.

Burgess, a driver with four years in the plant, said he came to ATI from another union steel mill in nearby Massil-

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Striking Alabama miners vote down ‘insulting’ offer

BY SUSAN LAMONT

ATLANTA — Some 1,100 union coal miners at Warrior Met Coal in Brookwood, Alabama, voted overwhelmingly April 9 to reject a tentative contract proposal and continue their strike. The United Mine Workers of America members struck War-

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Build fight against cop killings of George Floyd and Daunte Wright



Pioneer Press/Scott Takushi

Mural in Minneapolis near where George Floyd was killed. Millions of working people and youth — of all skin colors — joined protests after his death, demanding prosecution of cops.

BY MARY MARTIN

MINNEAPOLIS — As the state prosecution in the trial of fired police officer Derek Chauvin comes to an end, damning testimony by prosecution witnesses — including the Minneapolis police chief, the medical examiner who conducted the autopsy, and other officials — points to Chauvin’s responsibility in the killing of George Floyd here last May 25. The trial began March 29.

From their statements so far, it appears the cop’s defense strategy will be character assassination aimed at smearing Floyd.

Floyd, a 46-year-old African American, had been apprehended by police outside a grocery store on suspicion of passing a counterfeit \$20 bill to buy cigarettes. A chilling video taken by a bystander shows Chauvin forced Floyd

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—ON THE— PICKET LINE

Back locked-out Minnesota oil refinery workers’ fight for safety!

ST. PAUL PARK, Minn. — Two hundred Teamsters, members of Local 120, have been locked out by Marathon Petroleum here since January 22. While negotiations continue, the company, the biggest refinery owner in the U.S., has refused to budge, especially on its demand to use more nonunion workers.

“No matter what the cost to the community and the workers, Marathon will do anything just to make a few more bucks,” Ken Schwebach, a union retiree who worked 30 years at the refinery, told this *Militant* worker-correspondent on the picket line April 9. “This place can do a lot of damage.”

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Workers, unions need to fight for jobs for all who need them!

BY TERRY EVANS

For over a year, since the onset of the coronavirus epidemic and ensuing government lockdowns, U.S. bosses have thrown millions out of work to defend their profits. Neither Democratic nor Republican administrations have done anything to reverse this. The only way forward for workers and our unions is to

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Philippine gov’t steps up deadly raids on labor, political activists

BY JANET ROTH

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Working people in the Philippines face deadly repression as they look for ways to defend themselves from the impact of the worldwide capitalist crisis. President Rodrigo Duterte’s government is stepping up its assaults, including the killing of trade union and political activists.

Duterte ordered state forces to “ignore human rights” and kill “communist rebels” March 5, targeting the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People’s Army. Two days later, cops, backed by the military, shot dead nine unarmed labor and political organizers in coordinated raids near Manila. Six others were arrested.

Over 300 labor and political activists opposed to Duterte’s regime have been killed since he became president in 2016, according to Philippine rights group Karapatan.

Government forces shot dead nine farmers Dec. 30 on Panay island in the central Philippines. All were unarmed leaders of the indigenous Tumandok people, who were defending their lands against government plans to construct a dam that would force thousands from their homes.

For years Duterte has waged a “war on drugs,” unleashing cops and armed thugs who have killed thousands, particularly young people in working-class neighborhoods. The government says its assaults have led to 6,000 deaths, while rights groups say the toll is more than 27,000. During the past year these killings have surged.

Like capitalist governments else-

where, the Duterte regime has used the coronavirus pandemic to bolster its powers, imposing a brutally enforced lockdown. After hungry protesters in Manila defied the lockdown demanding food, Duterte gave orders to the police and military: “If they fight you, shoot them dead.”

Workers protest job cuts

“The question of jobs is central,” Genoveva Valdez, a teacher in the Philippines, wrote the *Militant* discussing the impact on working people of the government’s response to the pandemic. “Taxi and jeepney drivers, construction workers and vendors initially took much of the hit, but many more Filipinos are now without jobs.”

This includes 400,000 Filipinos who have had to return home after losing jobs overseas.

Hundreds of workers protested outside the First Glory Philippines garment factory in the Mactan Economic Zone in Cebu Nov. 30 after the company fired 300. This included the union president, Cristito Pangan, and other workers involved in an effort to organize a trade union.

Cops have set up special units to target workers organizing unions, saying these units were “the first line of defense from radical labor infiltration of the labor force.”

“When you say any opinion against the government, the next day you might be ‘red tagged’ as a leftist or even worse, a communist,” Jose Fernandez told the *Militant*. “Your point of view might endanger your life.” He is a supermarket



Reuters/Eloisa Lopez

Students protest in January at University of Philippines in Manila over attack on political rights by President Rodrigo Duterte. His government scrapped 1989 agreement barring cops from entering campus, alleging Maoist armed group, the NPA, was recruiting there.

worker here in New Zealand originally from the Philippines.

But people “are only scared for a short time,” he said. “If there is something wrong with a government policy, if you are fighting for what is right, there is no reason to stop.” The term “red tagging” is given to the government’s labeling of individuals who it alleges are supporters of the Communist Party of the Philip-

pines and New People’s Army. This creates a hit list of unionists, political activists and other critics of the government.

For over half a century, NPA groups have been engaged in armed clashes against government troops in mountainous parts of the countryside. The CPP and the NPA are Maoist, the dominant version of Stalinism in the Philippines.

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SWP ‘stimulus’ donations up \$20,000, now at \$118,500

Over the last week 18 new contributors have brought the growing total of contributions to the SWP from U.S. government \$1,400 “stimulus” payments to \$118,500 from 95 contributors around the country.

We look forward to a growing total! Join the effort!

The notes from the many contributors welcome the opportunity to contribute, and capture political confidence in the working class and commitment to building a revolutionary working-class party in the U.S.

Carole Lesnick, from Oakland writes: “Here’s my contribution along with many others to build the communist movement. Happy to be part of the effort.”

A similar note from Gale Shangold and Craig Honts in New Jersey: “Happy to be able to send the contributions!”

And from Dean Peoples in Seattle: “Build the working-class party!”

These contributions are making a tremendous difference toward expanding the ability of the party to bring its program to many thousands of workers and exploited toilers, and to join with other fighters in labor and social struggles. To build on a course toward the working class taking political power in the U.S. and joining with toilers worldwide to end social relations based on exploitation — class vs. class — and build a socialist society based on human solidarity.

Send your contribution! To contribute, make out your check to the Socialist Workers Party and send it to SWP, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. The *Militant* will report weekly on the progress of the appeal.

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

THE MILITANT

The ‘Militant’ covers crisis facing fishermen

In commercial fishing all over the world, small fishermen are being crushed by the big capitalist fishing fleets, aided by government regulations. The ‘Militant’ calls for the labor movement to back the struggles of fishermen and working farmers for a guaranteed income.

Militant/Jonathan Silberman
Andrés Mendoza, left, and Lee Colgan, small fishing boat crewman, Hastings, U.K.

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‘Help put SWP on NJ ballot’

Continued from front page

plan to get another 185 signatures to be able to turn in nearly double the state’s requirement in early May. Working people and youth they’ve met have purchased 65 subscriptions to the *Militant*, and 33 books by leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and other revolutionaries.

“I need a job. The stimulus money doesn’t even keep you afloat,” Kyondra Porterfield, a single mother with twin 2 year olds, told Kuniansky when the SWP candidate knocked on her door in Elizabeth. With businesses still shuttered because of the pandemic and affordable child care hard to come by, Porterfield has not been able to go back to work.

“I’ve met many women like you who’ve been forced to stay home because there is no affordable child care, or schools are closed,” Kuniansky said. “That’s why workers and our unions need to fight for a government-funded public works program to put millions to work building the things we need, like schools, child care facilities and roads, at union-scale wages.” Porterfield signed to put Kuniansky on the ballot.

Just a few doors down, Lorinda Williams invited Kuniansky into her apartment. “I’ve been disabled since 2014,” Williams said, but still has not been able to get government disability payments, an enormously difficult proposition for workers. “Every month you have to choose between feeding the kids or paying the rent,” she said. “Of course, feeding the kids comes first.”

Williams had worked in a nursing home and would like to go back to work. “But nobody wants to hire someone who can’t stay on their feet all day,” she said.

“Everyone who wants to work should be able to get a job,” Kuniansky said. “If workers controlled production, we would organize work so that everyone can contribute to producing the things we need. But the

capitalists, when they don’t think we are producing enough profits for them, just use us up and spit us out.”

Kuniansky also met 22-year-old Tasim Cook, who told her he thought that bosses and many in government look down on working-class youth. “They don’t think you can be any more than you already are,” he said.

Cook is not keen on the government’s “stimulus” money. “It just makes people dependent,” he said. He’d rather be working. “You connect with more people and different kinds of people.”

“That’s right,” Kuniansky agreed. “We need to be back at work so that we can fight together and stand up to the bosses.” She pointed to the example set by striking workers at ATI steel and coal miners at Warrior Met in Alabama.

“I have a friend who told me it’s different in Cuba,” Cook said. “That’s true,” Kuniansky answered. “In 1959 workers and farmers in Cuba overthrew the Batista dictatorship and took power into their own hands.” Cook and Kuniansky traded phone numbers to continue the discussion.

The next day Kuniansky spoke to Gladys Cornieo in Passaic. “I’m caring for 10 children and grandchildren,” Cornieo said, “and there is no school for any of them. There is zoom — but they learn nothing on it.”

“We live in a society ruled by the wealthy few who do not care about what working people face,” Kuniansky said. “They don’t care if we get an education. They just want workers who will follow



Militant/Seth Galinsky

Tasim Cook told Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of New Jersey, that government “stimulus” payments just make people dependent. “We need to be back at work, so that we can fight together and stand up to the bosses,” Kuniansky said.

orders. For education that really meets our needs, we need to fight for a workers and farmers government.”

Fight for shorter workweek

“Workers and our unions need to fight for a shorter workweek with no cut in weekly pay to share the available work around,” SWP campaigner Terry Evans said when he and Elizabeth Lariscy met Miguel Perrez at his apartment in Newark April 11. “The SWP campaign offers proposals to tie together workers who are employed and unemployed, to fight for what we need.” Perrez lost his job at a food

factory when the owners moved production to Israel. “The government should stop companies moving jobs abroad,” he said, “or make them pay when they do.”

“Bosses go where our labor is cheapest. We can’t stop that,” Evans said. “But workers need to organize wherever we are to defend ourselves and build unions and to back the struggles of fellow workers worldwide.”

“You’re different to the other parties. You don’t say vote for me and I’ll do everything for you,” Perrez noted as he signed up to put Kuniansky on the ballot.

“A lot of people around here hate the government,” he said. “But they need to hear what you are saying. That way they’ll start to get organized to do something about it.”

During the weekend a lively campaign forum here was addressed by Kuniansky, Wagner and Róger Calero, the SWP’s candidate for New York City mayor. Six of the 22 participants were attending a Militant Labor Forum for the first time after hearing the SWP was organizing to get on the ballot. Aparna Chowdhury, a middle-school teacher who met Wagner at a protest against police brutality earlier in the month, came and then joined a campaign team in Trenton the next day.

“No one else is addressing the problems and challenges of labor,” she said. “You are the strongest supporters of the labor movement.”

To join campaign teams in New Jersey or other places across the country, contact the nearest party branch, listed on page 8.

SWP campaign wins support for Marathon workers



Militant/Hank Scheer

MARTINEZ, Calif. — Three campaign supporters joined Joel Britton, Socialist Workers Party candidate for California Assembly in the San Leandro area, above, campaigning at the afternoon shift change in front of the Martinez Refining Co. here April 8.

“We explained that the campaign was organizing to win support for refinery workers locked out by Marathon Petroleum in Minnesota and for ATI workers on strike at steel mills in five states,” Britton told the *Militant*. “The response of a number of operators and maintenance workers at this oil refinery was enthusiastic.”

Last year PBF Energy bought this refinery from Royal Dutch Shell. Workers told Britton that the new bosses immediately went after the employees’ retirement plans, forcing workers to stay more years on the job to get their pension. They also said cutbacks in preventive and general maintenance had increased the risks of explosions and fires and placed workers and the community in serious jeopardy.

“Several workers told us that they knew about the Marathon lockout, having received an email about it from United Steelworkers Local 5,” Britton said. “The safety questions they are fighting around are the same as here in the Martinez refinery.”

He reported that “14 workers got single copies of the *Militant*, and one got a *Militant* subscription and *In Defense of the US Working Class* by Mary-Alice Waters. A number of the workers who stopped gave us contributions. One drove to a nearby ATM and returned with \$10 to buy the subscription and the book.”

— JEFF POWERS

Philippine raids

Continued from page 2

Their political course has prevented many working people — looking for ways to fight successive capitalist governments — from finding a revolutionary road forward.

Duterte included figures nominated by the CPP in his cabinet for a year after his election. But then he ended peace talks with the Maoist groups Nov. 23, 2017, after armed clashes between them and government forces. Twelve days later he signed a proclamation designating both the CPP and NPA as “terrorist” organizations.

Last June the government passed a new anti-terrorism law. “Suspected ‘terrorists’ can be arrested without any warrant,” Valdez told the *Militant*. It’s obvious “the law is not to squelch terror but to squelch dissent, to shut down protests.”

Recent protests against the government have mostly taken place on campuses, Valdez wrote. In January the government tore up a 1989 agreement barring cops from entering the University of the Philippines, alleging the NPA was recruiting people there. A large crowd gathered at the university to protest the attack on political rights.

— CALENDAR —

NEW YORK

New York

60 Years Since Cuba’s Victory at the Bay of Pigs and Launching of the Campaign that Ended Illiteracy! Cuba’s Socialist Revolution: Its Impact in the U.S. and World. Speakers: Ambassador Pedro Luis Pedrosa Cuesta, permanent representative of Cuba to U.N.; Mary-Alice Waters, Socialist Workers Party National Committee, editor of *Bay of Pigs/Playa Girón: 1961, Washington’s First Military Defeat in the Americas*; Catherine Murphy, director of new documentary on Cuba’s literacy drive, who will introduce clip from her new video *Maestros Voluntarios* (Volunteer teachers). Sun., April 18. Reception, 3 p.m.; program, 4 p.m. 307 W. 36th St. 13th floor. Tel.: (646) 434-8117 or (551) 240-1512. Sponsored by New York and New Jersey Socialist Workers Party.

As US, Tehran open talks, Iran's rulers continue weapons program

BY ROY LANDERSEN

An explosion that disabled parts of the Iranian rulers' main nuclear facility at Natanz April 11 was blamed on Israeli government forces by Tehran. Most media in Israel attributed the attack to Mossad, the Israeli rulers' spy agency.

Less than a week before, indirect talks began between Washington, Tehran and other governments, seeking to revive the 2015 nuclear deal that aimed to limit the Iranian rulers' acquisition of nuclear weapons in exchange for an end to sanctions.

The talks are unfolding as Tehran, Washington and other capitalist powers are jockeying to strengthen their economic and political interests in the region.

Former President Donald Trump pulled Washington out of that deal in 2018, citing Tehran's intervention in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Yemen and its continuing ballistic missile program. On April 6 talks began between delegations from Washington and Tehran along with representatives from France, Germany and the U.K., as well as European Union officials.

State Department officials said April 7 that Washington would consider lifting an unspecified number of sanctions it imposes on Iran that have crippled the Iranian rulers' trade and fall hardest on working people.

Tehran, backed by both Moscow and Beijing, demands all the sanctions go. While it continues to claim its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, the Iranian government had abandoned compliance with the 2015 pact by openly enriching uranium to 20% purity. After the attack, Tehran announced April 13 that it would now begin enriching uranium to 60%, closer to bomb-grade, and activate 1,000 advanced centrifuge machines at the underground Natanz plant.

The regime in Iran calls for the destruction of Israel.

As the talks between Washington and Tehran began, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke out against reviving the 2015 pact. He said his government would "never allow Iran to obtain the nuclear capability to carry out its genocidal goal of eliminating Israel."

He pledged to continue to take action against Tehran's deployment of militias and missiles across the region. The Iranian rulers have entrenched their forces in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and elsewhere,

in order to expand their clout against rival Arab rulers and also to target Israel.

Iranian officials called the April 11 attack an act of "nuclear terrorism" and Foreign Minister Javad Zarif vowed revenge. The White House quickly denied any involvement.

The attack is the latest in a series of clashes between the Israeli rulers and Tehran, including an explosion in Natanz last July; the assassination of Iran's top nuclear scientist in November; attacks on Iranian and Israeli ships in the Gulf region; a missile and drone strike on Saudi oil facilities in 2019 by Tehran; and repeated airstrikes by the Israeli military against Tehran-backed militia and missile bases in Syria.

Iran's rulers target working people

Iranian workers and farmers made a deep-going popular revolution in 1979, overthrowing the U.S.-backed rule of the shah. Over years, capitalist forces led by Shiite clerics stifled that revolution and pushed working people out of politics.

They launched a counterrevolutionary expansionist course that has brought them into greater conflict with working people across the region. Tehran-backed militias brutally defended the Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria after an uprising against his rule. They aided the Iraqi government's bloody repression of pro-



Demonstration in Mashhad, Iran, December 2018, protests government's wars, economic crisis and attacks on political rights. Actions spread to scores of cities across the country.

tests for jobs and political rights in 2019.

In Iran itself working people took to the streets at the end of the same year to protest the financial and human costs of the regime's wars and its refusal to meet the needs of the population.

"Rival ruling classes throughout the region know that, despite the 2015 agreement, Tehran is close to being able to produce nuclear weapons and delivery systems. Such arms, however, would provide no defense for Iran against military threats from U.S. imperialism and other nuclear powers, nor any relief from the inhumane and unconscionable sanctions Washington and other imperialist governments have imposed on the Iranian people," Socialist Workers Party

leader Steve Clark wrote in the *Militant* article "Revolution, Counterrevolution and War in Iran" in April 2018. "To the contrary, weapons of mass destruction would merely provide a rationalization for the Saudi Arabian and other regimes in the region to enter the nuclear arms race, as well as for the Israeli government to maintain and bolster its existing nuclear arsenal.

"The Socialist Workers Party demands Washington's immediate unilateral nuclear disarmament. We call on the eight other regimes in the world that currently have these catastrophic weapons to get rid of them, and we oppose their development and deployment by *any* government."

Striking Alabama miners vote down 'insulting' offer

Continued from front page

rior Met Coal April 1, after their previous five-year contract expired. The new proposal was announced April 5, and miners held union meetings two days later to discuss the offer.

They found out the proposal consisted of a \$1.50 raise over the next five years and little else.

Warrior Met Coal was formed in 2016 out of the bankruptcy of Jim Walter Resources in Tuscaloosa County. The "new" mine owners, hedge fund bosses and others owed money by Jim Walters got help from the capitalist bankruptcy court to take over and reorganize the company. They demanded major givebacks on wages and working conditions.

The bosses insisted these sacrifices were necessary to keep the company afloat and preserve miners' jobs as well as benefits for retirees. Wage cuts, loss of sick days and holidays, higher costs for health care, moves to shortcut safety to speed up production and other concessions were forced on the union.

Jeff Fleenor, who has worked at Warrior Met and its predecessor for 16 years, told the *Tuscaloosa Thread* that the contract they voted down April 9 was an "insult."

One of the major issues is the bosses' efforts to use greater numbers of nonunion contract workers. Fleenor said he is standing up for future miners who get hired at Warrior Met.

"I understand the concerns of some people being out of work for a while [during the bankruptcy], however I didn't come back to roll over on this contract," he said. "I specifically came back for this day to ensure we got a fair contract and that I wasn't the generation that let all the sacrifices that

people in the UMWA fought for 90 to 100 years ago fade into obscurity. Our sacrifices pale in comparison to those at the start of the labor movement and the early years of the UMWA."

"I owe it to miners of days gone by, my family and myself to fight for what we deserve," he said.

"This strike is helping educate the young miners on what the union is all about," veteran miner Steve Mote told the *Militant* before the vote.

UMWA President Cecil Roberts

says negotiations with the company are ongoing.

Roberts announced April 12 that the union will begin organizing "Unity Rallies" in the Brookwood area for members, families and community supporters to build solidarity.

Messages of support and solidarity should be sent to UMWA District 20, 21922 Hwy. 216 (Miners Memorial Parkway), McCalla, AL 35111. Email: umwadistrict20@bellsouth.net. Phone (205) 477-7500. Fax: (205) 477-0004.

Anti-labor outfit attacks miners strike, union

Union coal miners in Brookwood, Alabama; steelworkers at ATI; and nurses in Worcester, Massachusetts, are on strike today, fighting against attacks by their bosses. They set an example to millions of workers and need and deserve solidarity. In the midst of these struggles the so-called World Socialist Web Site says that the workers' unions are worthless and tells workers to leave them — doing the work of the bosses.

The website is run by a notoriously anti-labor outfit calling itself the Socialist Equality Party. It has nothing to do with the working class. Despite its name, the party has nothing to do with the fight of workers and our allies to defend ourselves on the road to replace capitalist rule with our own power.

The Socialist Equality Party has a long record of trying to demoralize workers involved in labor struggles. It takes advantage of real difficulties facing striking workers and defaults by union leaders in order to promote the bosses' slander of the labor movement.

In an April 10 article, the World Socialist Web Site celebrates the defeat of efforts by workers at Amazon's Bessemer warehouse to organize a union. They say the union lost because "workers rightly see that these corrupt organizations will do nothing to defend them."

The same post urges miners on strike at Warrior Met Coal in Brookwood to quit their union, the United Mine Workers. An April 7 WSWWS article demands steelworkers at ATI break away from their union, the United Steelworkers, claiming it's "not a workers organization" and "cannot be transformed into one."

This is the opposite of what is needed to advance workers' struggles. We need unions. We need them to be stronger and to fight harder. Workers need to discuss how to do that effectively as we build much-needed labor solidarity.

Don't fall for the WSWWS attacks! Workers can solve our own problems, and use our unions to defend ourselves and join in broader struggles.

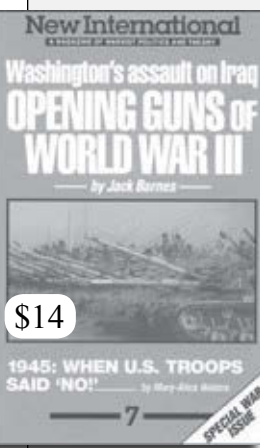
— TERRY EVANS

Washington's assault on Iraq Opening Guns of World War III

by Jack Barnes

In *New International* no. 7

"The Gulf War held a mirror to the declining capitalist world order and accelerated its contradictions. It sounded the opening guns of sharpening conflicts and class battles."



pathfinderpress.com

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Continued from front page

The question of safety is a key part of the strike. The refining process here uses highly volatile chemicals that if not handled carefully by experienced workers could lead to a disaster.

“We are getting unbelievable support. Volunteers come out here, day and night, to walk the line with us,” a locked-out worker told me.

Laborers Local 153 has set up banners of support along the road into the plant. Local members staff their tractor-trailer across from the refinery and use it to feed all the pickets.

Ilona Gersh, a Walmart worker from Chicago and member of the Socialist Workers Party, joined the picket line April 9, bringing a solidarity card signed by over 20 of her co-workers.

Given the standoff — 200 workers vs. a worldwide oil company behemoth — support is crucial. Come and join the 24/7 picket line. Tell your co-workers, union and any other group you’re part of about the strike. Send messages and contributions to Teamsters Local 120, 9422 Ulysses St. NE, Blaine, MN 55434.

—Helen Meyers

Minnesota hospital workers picket for safety, higher wages

MINNEAPOLIS — A crowd of several hundred members of Service Employees International Union and their supporters picketed outside Abbott Northwestern Hospital here April 7 in support of the union’s demand for a new contract. When union members chanted, “When we fight,” the crowd answered, “We win!”

The workers have been in contract negotiations with Allina Health since January. There are some 4,000 technicians, nursing assistants, pharmacists, janitors and other hospital workers represented by SEIU at the eight Allina facilities in the area. The workers are fighting against staffing shortages, a lack of safety and for higher wages, as well as job and pension security. So far the bosses have refused any wage increase in the first year of the contract.

“We’ve dealt with PPE shortages, CDC and Allina constantly changing guidelines, we’ve endangered our lives and our families’ lives,” Harry O’Mara, a patient transport aide at Abbott Northwestern, said at the rally. “If they will not negotiate a fair contract, we stand ready to continue to fight. We have overwhelmingly authorized a strike, if necessary, throughout every Allina facility.”

Tracey Pittrich, a registered nurse at Children’s Minnesota hospital and member of the Minnesota Nurses Association, said she came to show solidarity. “We share similar struggles and I want to let them know they are not alone,” she told the *Militant*.

Socialist Workers Party Minneapolis mayoral candidate Doug Nelson also joined the picket. He took the opportunity to learn more about the hospital workers’ struggle and to discuss the fight for safe working conditions being waged by locked-out Teamster members against Marathon Petroleum in nearby St. Paul Park.

“The reason we’re out here is because workers are being disrespected. I got COVID here, I gave my family COVID,



Militant/Doug Nelson

Several hundred SEIU members and supporters picket Abbott Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis April 7 in fight for new contract, more staffing to ensure safety, higher wages.

and we were lucky that no one got too sick,” Jeff Sarro, an SEIU union steward at Abbott Northwestern, told Nelson. “They want to offer them nothing, during a pandemic, no extra pay, nothing. That’s why all these people are out here.”

“It’s important that workers are drawing a line, like the locked-out Teamsters and what you guys are doing here to-

day,” Nelson said. “The Socialist Workers Party campaign is going to build solidarity and help bring workers who are fighting together.”

More pickets are slated for St. Francis Regional Medical Center April 14 at 2:30 p.m., United Hospital April 21 at 2 p.m. and Mercy Hospital April 28.

—Nick Neeser

Gerald Reed freed, decades after cop torture, frame-up

BY MARK CLEMENTS

CHICAGO — Four days after his release from prison, Gerald Reed, accompanied by supporters, told a news conference here, “This is a dream come true. I always told my family members that I’d come home, but I was wondering when.”

Reed was freed following the commutation of his life sentence by Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker April 1.

“I left part of my heart back there” in prison, he said. “It’s hard leaving somebody behind, and on top of that, they are innocent as well. They don’t have the same attention I have. My shoutout is for them.”

Reed’s supporters waited six hours outside the prison, chanting for him to be released. As the car carrying him

arrived outside Stateville Correctional Center, they burst into cheers.

Reed had been incarcerated for nearly 31 years following his wrongful conviction for a double murder on Chicago’s South Side in 1990. The detectives who arrested Reed — part of notorious Chicago police Cmdr. Jon Burge’s “midnight crew” — took him to a police station where they tortured him into confessing to murders he had not committed.

The Illinois Torture Inquiry and Relief Commission, created in 2009 after protests forced out the facts about Burge’s cop torture operation, examined Reed’s case in 2012 and ruled his claims of torture as credible.

Burge and his subordinates tortured dozens of people — mainly Blacks —

to gain false confessions.

It took until December 2018 before Cook County Judge Thomas Gainer overturned Reed’s 1991 conviction, ruling his “confession” had been extracted through torture. But prosecutors blocked his release, demanding a new trial.

In a blow to Reed and to the Bill of Rights, Circuit Court Judge Thomas Hennelly reversed Gainer’s ruling in February 2020, ordering Reed to serve the remainder of the life sentence. Hennelly had been assigned to take over Reed’s case after Gainer retired.

It was only the governor’s commutation that finally set him free. Though released, his 1991 conviction still stands.

Elliot Zinger, one of Reed’s attorneys, has petitioned the state Supreme Court seeking to overturn Hennelly’s ruling and vacate his conviction once and for all.

Speaking at Reed’s news conference, Armanda Shackelford, his mother, thanked all those who helped in the fight to free her son. She said the fight was not just for him.

Mark Clements is an organizer for the Chicago Torture Justice Center.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



April 29, 1996

The following greetings were sent to the Korean people by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party.

As Washington and Seoul step up their military threats and provocations, we stand with the Korean people in support of your unconditional determination to win national sovereignty and reunification. The true aggressor on the Korean peninsula for the last fifty years has been U.S. imperialism, backed by Washington’s client regime in Seoul as well as imperial Tokyo.

Washington’s war drive extends to the socialist revolution in Cuba as well. The U.S. rulers know they have failed in all their attempts over more than thirty-five years to bring the workers and farmers of Cuba to their knees.

Our party pledges to continue to tell the truth about Korea and join with other workers and young people in championing the struggle for reunification.



April 30, 1971

The Nixon administration’s latest “inflation alert” is mainly directed against steelworkers who will be negotiating new contracts beginning July 1.

There is not one shred of justification to the demagogic attack on steelworkers that the wage increases they are seeking are inflationary. The central causes of the inflation are the monopolistic pricing policies of the dominant U.S. corporations, of which the steel industry is a paramount example, and the government’s massive deficit financing of the Vietnam war.

This inflation is in reality an indirect tax that falls most heavily on working people.

Workers not only need to catch up with the price rises that occurred during the term of their old contracts. They need protection against future price rises. The steelworkers will be demanding a return of a cost-of-living clause in their contracts.



April 27, 1946

We celebrate this May Day amidst a powerful resurgence of worldwide struggle against capitalist exploitation and rule.

Here in the United States the organized industrial workers have met the Big Business onslaught with a mighty series of militant strike actions. The masses of Europe are desperately seeking a release from capitalist barbarism.

Armed uprisings for independence are being fought out in Indonesia and Indochina. Strikes, mass demonstrations, and large-scale mutinies in the Indian Navy and armed forces testify to the strength of the liberation movements within the British Empire. The peoples of Puerto Rico and the Philippines are demanding complete freedom from Wall Street domination.

All these struggles have a common source in the revulsion and protest of the toiling masses against the terrible consequences of World War II.

Teamster Politics

by Farrell Dobbs

Unionism and politics cannot be separated. Workers must enter the political arena as an independent class force, with their own party.

\$16

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Fight for jobs for all workers!

Continued from front page
organize to defend our jobs, wages and working conditions and to wage a class battle for every worker to have a job.

Everywhere workers resist the attacks of the bosses and their government, they win broad support. Striking ATI steelworkers, Marathon oil refinery workers in Minnesota, Warrior Met Coal miners in Alabama, nurses in Worcester, Massachusetts, and others have gotten solidarity from working people whenever the word gets out about their fights.

“No workers should be left to fight the bosses on their own,” Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New Jersey governor, tells fellow workers as she campaigns around the state. “Workers and our unions need to champion these struggles, spread the word about them and expand the support they get. We can make a difference!”

New jobless claims rose for the second straight week April 8, hitting 744,000. The total number of people depending on state or federal unemployment benefits is 18.2 million.

The number of workers on long-term unemployment is rising. Some 43% of all unemployed workers today have been out of work for over six months, close to an all-time record. Nearly a quarter have been out of work for more than a year. Workers isolated at home without a job can get demoralized and lose their sense of being part of the working class.

The jobs crisis has hit especially hard on women workers, accounting for 55% of U.S. job losses. Millions more women face reduced work hours.

Under capitalism, women bear the most responsibility for caring for children, as well as the elderly. This is greatly exacerbated by the widespread closings of schools and child care centers.

Millions of workers and their families don’t need these statistics to know the crisis they face.

Disruptions in “just in time” supply lines, which profit-hungry bosses use, led General Motors to announce tempo-

rary shutdowns and extended existing ones April 8, affecting 10,000 workers. Other auto bosses have done likewise.

McDonald’s bosses announced plans to close hundreds of outlets in Walmart stores April 8. Last year bosses at Dunkin’ Donuts said they were shutting 450 locations by the end of the year. Starbucks said 400 outlets would go by the end of 2021.

‘Cut workweek with no cut in pay’

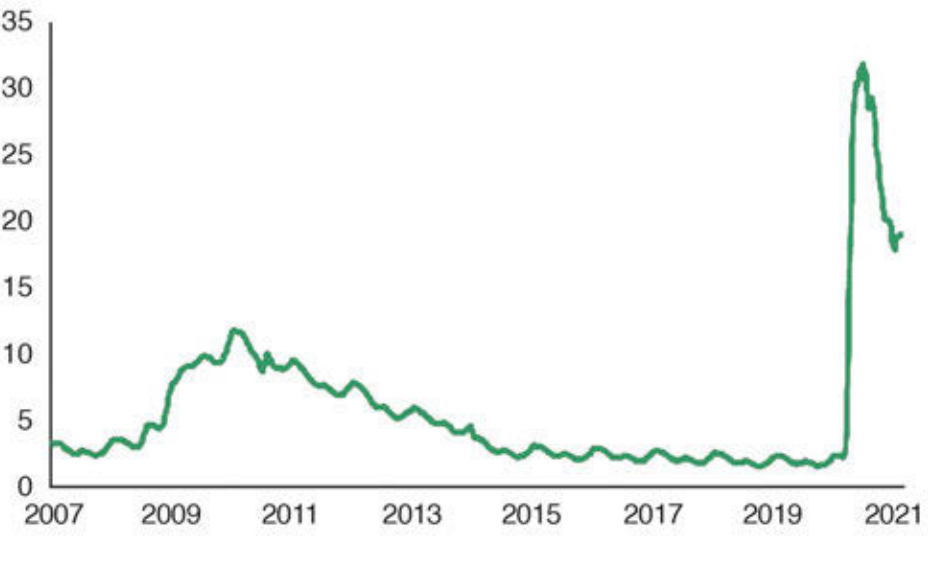
“Workers and our unions need to fight for a shorter workweek with no cut in pay, to share the available work around,” Kuniansky said. “Our unions need to lead a fight for a federally funded public works program at union-scale pay to put millions back to work building the hospitals, schools, housing and other things working people need.”

“All President Joseph Biden and the government discuss is more money for the employers and government bodies, and a little more welfare-like handouts to workers,” she said. “We need jobs, to be shoulder to shoulder with our co-workers and able to fight together.”

As vaccinations spread and government lockdowns are cut back, there has been an uptick in hiring. This is good for the working class. All workers should fight through the red tape and delays to get vaccinated.

In sharp contrast to the devastating impact of the capitalist crisis on working people, the number of newly minted billionaires swelled by 30% last year, *Forbes* magazine says in its annual survey. And their list doesn’t even count the dominant ruling class families, who conceal their wealth in foundations and trusts, like the Rockefellers. Number

18.2 million unemployed US workers on gov’t benefits



DOL/Haver Analytics, TD Economics

Graph shows millions of workers remain unemployed today, majority dependent on temporary gov’t “pandemic” handouts — 43% for more than six months; nearly 25% for over a year.

one on their 2021 list is Amazon owner Jeff Bezos, who just fought off efforts by workers at the company’s Bessemer, Alabama, warehouse to unionize.

As working people organize to defend ourselves from the assaults of Bezos and his class, we also face the growing impact of inflation, driving down the value of our wages. The government’s official Consumer Price Index — at 2.6% today — masks the reality workers face: steep increases in the cost of food and fuel.

Bouts of inflation are endemic to the cycles of capitalist exploitation. “To protect our wages, workers and our unions need to fight for cost-of-living escalator clauses in every contract to raise wages, retirement pay and Social Security every time prices go up,” Kuniansky said.

As they see signs of revival in their capitalist economy, bosses are looking for ways to intensify the exploitation of working people.

The “long drought in worker productivity” can now be ended, Sarah Chaney Cambon argues in the April 4 *Wall Street Journal*, “thanks to pandemic-induced technological adoption.” What she means by that mouthful is eliminating “brick and mortar stores” and their workers by expanding e-commerce and reducing hands-on medical care to a minimum. If doctors and nurses work by video conference, she says, they can “move quickly between patient calls.” All steps in that direction are aimed at increasing the bosses’ share of the wealth that workers’ labor creates.

“To strengthen our struggles against bosses’ attacks today and against those they will inflict tomorrow, workers need to build our own party, a labor party,” Kuniansky said. “It would act in the interests of all the exploited and oppressed and organize to lead millions to take political power into our own hands.”

Death penalty abolished in Virginia, victory for workers

BY JANET POST

“There is no place for the death penalty in this commonwealth, in the South or in this nation,” Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam told the press as he signed a bill abolishing capital punishment March 24

in front of the Greensville Correctional Center, where the state’s execution chamber is located. That made the state the 23rd to abolish the barbaric practice.

Virginia’s rulers carried out 1,300 executions, more than any other state, since the first recorded execution in 1608. The state government executed 113 people since 1976 when the U.S. Supreme Court reinstated capital punishment, second only to Texas.

“No state that has used the death penalty that long and that often has ever before abolished capital punishment,” Robert Dunham, executive director of the Death Penalty Information Center, told CNN.

The sentences of the two men on Virginia’s death row will be changed to life without parole.

Of the 377 inmates executed in Virginia in the 20th century, 296 of them — 79% — were Black. Today 41% of death-row inmates in the U.S. are Black. These were significant factors in the Virginia legislature’s debate of the bill.

“The capitalist rulers use the death penalty as a class weapon to terrorize and break the spirit of workers and farmers, in hope of preventing them from standing up and fighting against their exploitation and oppression,” Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Philadelphia district attorney, told the *Militant*. “The U.S. has the highest incarceration rate in the world, overwhelmingly working class and disproportionately Black.”

Some 2,500 working people remain on death row in the U.S., 45 on federal death row in Terre Haute, Indiana. There have been 13 federal executions over the last 10 months.

The next state execution, of Quintin Phillippe Jones, is set for May 19 at the Tarrant County Corrections Center in Texas.

Demand end to federal executions

Led by the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, 82 organizations, including the American Civil Liberties Union and the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, sent a letter Feb. 9 to President Joseph Biden calling on the administration to immediately halt federal executions and dismantle the death-chamber building in Terre Haute.

During the 2020 election campaign Biden claimed he had changed his mind on the death penalty after 30 years in the Senate as a proponent. In 1994 Biden co-authored the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, which added 60 new offenses subject to the federal death penalty.

In a March 22 Associated Press article, “On Federal Death Row, Inmates Talk About Biden, Executions,” four federal death-row inmates at the Terre Haute prison exchanged emails with the reporters. “I don’t trust Biden,” wrote Daniel Troya, sentenced to death in 2009. “He set the rules to get us all here in the first place.”

BOOKS WORKERS NEED TODAY...

...ABOUT BUILDING THE ONLY KIND OF PARTY WORTHY OF THE NAME “REVOLUTIONARY”

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Build fight against cop killings

Continued from front page

onto the ground, put his knee on Floyd's neck as he's handcuffed and kept it there for over nine minutes until Floyd stops crying out for help and then becomes lifeless. Seeing Floyd suffer, numerous eyewitnesses pled with Chauvin to get off Floyd.

Chauvin is charged with second- and third-degree murder and manslaughter. Three additional fired officers, who helped restrain Floyd — J. Alexander Kueng, Thomas Lane and Tou Thao — face trial in August on charges of aiding and abetting second-degree murder and manslaughter.

"Once Mr. Floyd had stopped resisting — and certainly once he was in distress and trying to verbalize that — that should have stopped," Minneapolis Police Chief Medaria Arradondo testified April 5.

The medical examiner who performed the autopsy and other medical personnel testified that Floyd was killed by the cops' actions.

"The activities of the law enforcement officers resulted in Mr. Floyd's death, and specifically those activities were the subdual restraint and the neck compression," testified Dr. Lindsey Thomas, a medical examiner for 37 years who retired from the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office and still works part time as a forensic pathologist.

The video of Floyd's death at the hands of police was seen around the world and sparked protests across the U.S. and internationally. The protests drew in millions — Black and Caucasian alike — in small towns and large cities, including many young people participating in social protest for the first time.

Contrary to the desire of millions to take a disciplined, effective stand against police violence, antifa forces and elements in the Black Lives Matter leadership instead led and justified an anti-working-class course, including violence, looting and race baiting. Many working people who wanted to protest the cop killing of Floyd were repulsed by the violence and destruction and stayed away. Protests shrank, then stopped.

Doug Nelson, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Minneapolis, lives near where Floyd was killed and joined in many of the protests. "There is a deep discussion going on in the working class about how to fight racist violence and police brutality and how to most effectively defend our interests as workers," Nelson told the *Militant*. "You won't find any of this in the big-business media, but you will if you knock on doors and engage people worker to worker — as SWP campaigners do.

"A couple of days ago I was campaigning in a racially mixed, working-class neighborhood near George Floyd Square. Like much of Minneapolis today, many houses display signs supporting the fight against police brutality," Nelson said.

"People we talked with wanted to discuss what to do about the issues posed in the trial and about the broader economic and social crisis working people face.

"To find the answers we must look to ourselves as workers, not to the bosses' government, their parties and their 'solutions,' I told people. We must strengthen our unions in the coming fights against the boss attacks," he said.

"We must organize and instill disci-

pline as part of those battles, including the fight against police brutality, and any other forms of exploitation and oppression. Our goal has to be to draw in the majority of working people, who are increasingly looking for a working-class road forward," said Nelson.

Deep discussion on road forward

SWP candidates and campaign supporters in the Upper Midwest — those who back Nelson's campaign and those supporting Joe Swanson for City Council in Lincoln, Nebraska, as well as Illinois SWP state campaign chair Dan Fein — are collaborating and campaigning to spread working-class solidarity and the SWP's program to meet today's attacks by the boss class.

On April 10 a team of campaign supporters, including Ilona Gersh from Chicago, campaigned in North Minneapolis where they met Lloyd Greer on his porch.

They introduced the SWP campaign platform, including the need for our unions to fight for a government-funded public works program to create millions of jobs at union-scale wages to build hospitals, schools, housing and other things workers need. They urged workers to join in building solidarity with the locked-out workers at Marathon Petroleum in nearby St. Paul Park.

Gersh told Greer she had participated in protests in Chicago against the cop killing of Floyd.

Greer is a long-term resident of the neighborhood. "The police don't know the neighborhood, they don't know the people who live here, they don't engage with us," he said. "In George Floyd's case, if they knew him, maybe they would've talked with him first. It's hard for me to trust the police to protect me from the monsters out there when they're acting like monsters themselves."

"The cops and the capitalist rulers they serve think all of us are 'deplorable' and criminals," Gersh said. "I believe that without the public demonstrations, there wouldn't be a trial today."

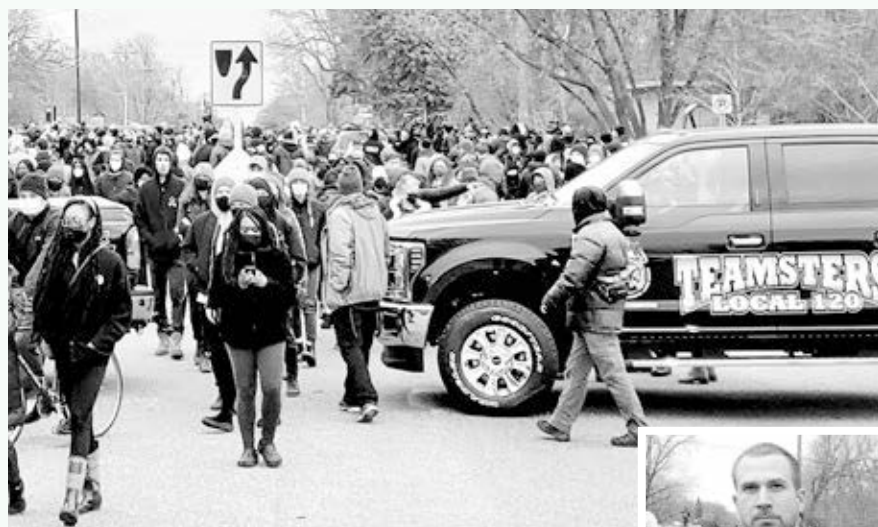
"Yes, when we make them hear us, it makes things happen," said Greer. "I don't know if he'll be convicted."

"The police are rarely prosecuted because the bosses and politicians use police intimidation and brutality to try and keep workers in line," Gersh said.

"I went to George Floyd Square, but I didn't participate. It was too dangerous, and I was bringing my kids," said Greer. "I support the movement, though."

"Malcolm X said his aim was to wake people up to our worth, our capabilities, not our oppression," Gersh said. "Whenever we organize to fight together — whether in a strike battle or against police brutality — we begin to transform ourselves into stronger, more

'Charge and prosecute cop who killed Daunte Wright'



Militant photos: Above, Nick Neeser; inset, Mary Martin

BROOKLYN CENTER, Minn. — In response to the police killing of Daunte Wright here, thousands of people joined a 30-minute candlelight vigil April 12 organized by Wright's family at the intersection where he died. The family set the protest to be over before the 7 p.m. curfew imposed by the governor after the killing.

Teamsters Local 120, the union of 200 locked-out Marathon Petroleum refinery workers, participated, using two of the union's trucks to help block off the vigil area, above.

Doug Nelson, inset, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Minneapolis mayor, and campaign supporters participated in the gathering. Nelson held a sign that read, "Charge and prosecute the killer cop!" Several participants asked to take photos of the sign and expressed their agreement.

Two miles away over 1,000 people gathered and heard speeches in front of the Brooklyn Center police station. The majority of participants left the rally to comply with the curfew, but some stayed and, under the cover of darkness, jumped up and down on top of police cars and threw rocks and bottles at the police. Cops responded with tear gas and flash-bang grenades. Many businesses have boarded up their windows.

— MARY MARTIN



class-conscious political people. Anti-social behavior goes down."

Also campaigning in North Minneapolis, David Rosenfeld and Helen Meyers met Sandy Roy-Carter who wanted to know what the SWP campaign had to say on how to fight against racism.

"We explain that the fight against racism is class versus class, not race against race," Rosenfeld said.

"I agree it's a class thing," Roy-Carter said. "People get separated and divided."

Pointing to the testimony so far in the trial of Derek Chauvin, she said, "It's good to finally be vindicated about what the cops really do. But this trial won't solve police brutality or racism."

Jessica Little, a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union who works as a cashier at a grocery cop, recalled the protests in Minneapolis last summer. But then groups who wanted to commit violence went into action. "It scared the crap out of me and other people when sections of the city were burned and shut down," Little said. "Those who destroyed things undermined the ability of others to organize."

Cops kill Daunte Wright

On April 11, cops in a city near Minneapolis, Brooklyn Center, stopped, shot

and killed 20-year-old Daunte Wright, who is African American. They claim they pulled him over for an out-of-date registration sticker and then saw he had an outstanding warrant. The cops say he tried to drive away.

The city's police chief, Tim Gannon, says it was a horrible accident, that the cop — later identified as Kimberly Potter, a 26-year veteran and president of the Brooklyn Center Police Officers Association — meant to shoot her Taser, but pulled her gun instead.

He played her police body camera video, and Potter can be heard saying, "I'll tase you. Taser! Taser! Taser!" then fires. Hearing the shot, she says, "Holy s--t! I just shot him."

Protests broke out that night, marked by looting and violence. Some 20 stores were broken into.

"All the violence, if it keeps going, it's only going to be about the violence," Katie Wright, Daunte's mother, told protesters. "We need it to be about why my son got shot for no reason. We need to make sure it's about him and not about smashing police cars, because that's not going to bring my son back."

Both Gannon and Potter resigned April 13.

"The police killing of Daunte Wright is just the latest incident laying bare the fundamental anti-working-class character of the cops, whose brutality has always been brought down particularly hard on the Black community," SWP candidate Nelson said April 12. "It highlights the need for the kinds of protests that can mobilize the largest outpourings possible against this brutality. This requires the organization of a broad, popular and disciplined working-class movement."

Chicago: Socialist Workers Party Midwest Meeting Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

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Mobilizing working people, Cuba defeats Bay of Pigs invasion

This week's special book feature is Playa Girón/Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas by Fidel Castro and José Ramón Fernández, marking the 60th anniversary of this historic event. Fernández was one of a group of army officers who revolted against the U.S.-backed Batista police dictatorship in 1956. He was imprisoned alongside, and joined, members of Fidel Castro's July 26 Movement. Under Castro, he was the commander of Cuban forces that defeated the U.S.-backed invasion in April 1961 in less than 72 hours. The excerpt is from his 1999 testimony, "The Cuban people, rifles in hand, were convinced of their cause." Copyright © 2001 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

BY JOSÉ RAMÓN FERNÁNDEZ

We cannot discuss Playa Girón and its meaning without going back to its roots and viewing it as the culmination of a stage of the U.S. effort to destroy the Cuban Revolution, a stage whose final outcome was the defeat of Brigade 2506 on the sands of Playa Girón.

Most striking and surprising is the magnitude of the CIA plan, with not a single detail overlooked, whether military, economic, or political. These include: efforts to prepare and trigger an insurgency in mountainous regions; efforts to destabilize and subvert the



Granma

José Ramón Fernández walks ahead of Cuban soldiers aiding captured mercenary in April 1961. U.S.-backed invasion was "well organized, well armed and well supported, but lacked a just cause to defend," Fernández said. "Firm support for the revolution and Fidel was decisive."

entire country including the use of terrorism; attempts to create a psychological climate conducive to the objective of destroying the Revolution; recruitment and training centers to ensure the optimal preparation of the mercenary brigade for conventional limited-range battles, including supplying it with technical resources, i.e., weapons and equipment of all types, including fighter planes and heavily armed ships; the assembling and structuring of these forces; the manipulative and deceptive — and, at the same time, domineering — role of U.S. military and political leaders in working with the members of these forces; and many other aspects.

The magnitude of these plans has been covered up by the enemies of the Revolution, who are more concerned with attributing the defeat to the mistakes and deficiencies of the U.S. administrations involved rather than finding the true causes of the debacle.

It is also necessary to mention here the measures taken by the Revolution, under Fidel's leadership, to foil the enemy's plans. To be noted are the actions against banditry and against infiltration by the CIA and by counterrevolutionary organizations operating both in Cuba and the United States; the fight against sabotage, which reduced to ashes some of the country's most important retail and industrial establishments; the crushing of all the truly record number of attempts to assassinate the Commander in Chief in the period

prior to Girón; Fidel's success in clarifying the situation in face of the plans to intimidate the people through psychological means, using a whole arsenal of methods and propaganda techniques of subversive warfare; Radio Swan, the lies and the rumors — completely unethical, brazenly cynical, and malicious — such as those that promoted the campaign around child custody, which was designed to trample on the most cherished values of the Cuban family.

From a strategic and tactical point of view, the concept of the operation was not flawed. They chose an area where they could disembark, where there was an airstrip and buildings, and that was separated from solid ground by a swamp, across which there were only three roads, on which they were to drop paratroopers. ...

What we have said about the adequacy of their choice for the zone of operations is valid. ... This is corroborated by José Pérez San Román, leader of the mercenary brigade, in his book *Respuesta: La verdad sobre Girón*: "The goal of the Cuban mission was to assure this beachhead and establish itself on a portion of free Cuban territory on which to immediately bring in the broadly representative Cuban Exile Government, to convert it into a Cuban Government in Arms that would be granted international recognition ... along with the accompanying political, economic, and military support already arranged by the U.S. government and a number of

Latin American countries."

The mercenaries came well organized, well armed, and well supported. What they lacked was a just cause to defend. That is why they did not fight with the same passion, courage, conviction, valor, firmness, bravery, and spirit of victory as did the revolutionary forces.

Hence the surprise at the scope of the Cuban people's victory. This must have surprised the U.S. government, which expected a different result. The outcome can be explained only by the courage of a people who saw the January 1 triumph as the genuine opportunity to determine their own future. This is why they proudly wore the militia uniforms and were on alert, and willing to fight, with the firm conviction they would win.

The men and women, the people who in early January 1959 cheered Fidel Castro in his triumphant tour of nearly the entire island, were the same ones who on April 17, 1961 — convinced of their cause, rifles in hand, conscious of the declaration of the socialist character of our revolution — were determined to resist and repel the U.S. attack.

Over that brief period, the Revolution's work, and Fidel's words in particular, reached deeply into the hearts of the Cuban people, who identified with the ideas of national sovereignty, social justice, equality, and dignity. The Revolution had resolved the land question. It was taking sure, tangible steps to put an end to racial discrimination and the discrimination against women. It was assuring access by the masses to employment, education, health care, sports, and culture. The goal of eradicating all forms of corruption took hold in the collective consciousness, a concrete manifestation of the economic and social gains made in such a short period of time.

Fidel personally led the fight against the imperialist attack at Girón. This aggression was waged by the mercenary brigade and saboteurs, by bandits in the countryside and CIA agents, by reactionaries and traitors of all stripes who had sold themselves to the empire. In this fight, the Cuban people knew what they were defending, and they did so with a sense of patriotism and revolutionary fervor. Their firm support of the Revolution and Fidel was a decisive factor in the lightning-quick victory over the mercenary invasion.

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We need our own party, a labor party

Statement by Róger Calero, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York City mayor, April 14.

There are two Americas. One that belongs to the propertied ruling families who own the banks, land, mines, factories, hospitals and other means of production — a class defended by their Democratic and Republican parties, and the other, that of working people who own only their labor power.

To defend ourselves and to chart a course to wrest political power out of the hands of the capitalist class, workers need our own party, a labor party.

We would use our own party to champion the fight for jobs, uniting employed and unemployed workers together in a struggle to get millions out of isolation in their home and back into work and the class struggle. It's there that we can build fighting unions, fight for better wages and workers control over production, and for the needs of all working people.

A labor party would mobilize far-reaching solidarity for workers forced on strike — like steelworkers at ATI, coal miners at Warrior Met, St. Vincent nurses in Massachusetts and locked-out Marathon Petroleum refinery workers today. Victory in these struggles would advance the interests of all workers and farmers.

A labor party would champion the fight against cop brutality, building on the example set by Teamsters Local 120, the union of the oil refinery workers. They organized to join a 1,000-strong vigil called by the family of Daunte Wright after he was shot dead by a cop this week in Minnesota.

Such a party would attract millions by standing up for all the exploited and oppressed, drawing them into united struggle. It would provide working people with an instrument to advance our own class interests, and not accept what the bosses say

they can afford or what Democratic and Republican politicians say is “realistic.”

Working-class struggle offers the road to deepen our self-confidence and our understanding that we are part of an international working class. We will transform our attitudes toward life, work and each other as we fight to change intolerable conditions, seeing ever more clearly we have the capacity to reorganize and run society ourselves.

Along that road millions will be won to building a movement to replace capitalist rule with a workers and farmers government.

Working people in Cuba showed this is not only necessary but can be done, when they overthrew the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship in 1959, taking power into their own hands.

Led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement, Cuban workers and farmers used their state power to take over the land, banks and factories; provided land to all who wanted to farm it; enforced an end to racial segregation; and drew millions of women into social and political life for the first time.

This month we celebrate the 60th anniversary of two key battles in the Cuban Revolution. One is the 1961 drive led by the new Cuban government that mobilized 100,000 volunteers to wipe out illiteracy on the island, which transformed both the volunteers and those they helped learn to read, drawing them more deeply into the revolution.

The second was the defeat of the U.S.-backed mercenary invasion at the Bay of Pigs in April 1961. The Cuban people mobilized and routed the mercenaries in three days. As Castro said, “There will be a victorious revolution in the United States before a victorious counterrevolution in Cuba.”

Join us emulating the inspiring example of the Cuban Revolution!

Support ATI strikers

Continued from front page

lon, where the bosses kept chipping away at contract gains workers had made. “Don’t let them open that door. You won’t get it back,” he said.

He said the company had been using “scare tactics” to try and intimidate workers before the strike. Burgess said bosses took out a machine saying they were going to scrap it, though it had been idle for years.

The picket line here is on a main street in this town of 10,000, and strikers report they get a lot of support: cars and trucks honking, and pizza, other food and things strikers need being dropped off.

We spoke with picket captain Rick Jones, who works on the bright anneal line with 27 years in the mill. He told us they’ve gotten support from nearby union steelworkers at two TimkenSteel plants and a Republic Steel mill, in the Canton-Massillon area. The local teachers union, a nearby local of the national air traffic controllers, and a plumbers and pipefitters union local have visited their picket line, he said.

Strikers on picket lines and union halls at other ATI mills *Militant* worker-correspondents have visited report a similar response — lots of contributions from individual workers, their families and small-business owners, and visits from union locals.

The bosses’ announcement they planned to shut down here in Louisville had a big impact on workers. Jones said at least 20 workers with less time in the mill had quit since the announcement.

“They won’t give us a date” for the closing, said Karl Brendle, a maintenance worker with 29 years in the plant and former local union president. “They want to carve us out of a shutdown pension or a severance package. They want to deny us the right to transfer.”

A United Steelworkers fact sheet posted on the wall of the picket trailer says the company “will hold [workers] hostage and not grant the shutdown pensions until or unless we ratify the agreement.”

Brendle and Jones both said they thought that nearly half the workers in the plant were very close to having the 30 years needed to qualify for their pension.

Need to organize, strengthen unions

The need for the union movement to take steps to organize more workers was also part of our discussion. Brendle said he understood that less than 10% of ATI’s workforce is unionized.

In addition to past and threatened closures of Steelworkers-organized plants, ATI management — through mergers and expansion — now has a large nonunion operation in North Carolina, which makes more profitable metals for the aerospace industry. The company says it has over 4,500 employees in the Charlotte area alone.

“That’s why they hire these ‘union avoidance’ people. They want to get rid of the union,” Brendle said. He described being part of a successful organizing effort at an ATI forging plant outside Lexington, Kentucky, where workers won a contract in 2008.

We talked about the recent organizing fight by workers at Amazon in Alabama, and what workers at Walmart — where I work — face. “Workers are going to organize,” Brendle said. “What they need is three to four thousand rowdy steelworkers to get them going.”

Strikers pointed to efforts by ATI to use scabs to gear up operations at a number of plants. A company spokesperson said ATI will restart critical operations using salaried employees and interim replacement workers, according to the Pittsburgh *Tribune-Review*.

Vans transporting scabs have been seen at some of the plants. When I visited the picket line at the Latrobe plant, east of Pittsburgh, workers told me that a van full of strikebreakers had shown up for the first time that day.

Picket captain Pete Gaynor, an electrician with 33 years in the mill, said they hadn’t started up the mill yet. “They’re not melting. I assume they’re just training.” He explained the company is focusing efforts there because the Latrobe plant has more modern equipment where they can turn out products with less impurities that are more profitable.

Help win solidarity for the strike! Join the picket lines. Send your support or contributions to USW Local 1196 at 1080 Brackenridge Ave., Brackenridge, PA 15014, or USW Local 1046, 925 W. St. Louis Ct., Louisville, OH 44641.

Malcolm Jarrett contributed to this article.

Protesters defy Myanmar military assaults



Tachileik News Agency

Demonstrators in Mandalay march April 14 demanding end to military rule.

Continued from front page

their peasant villages or into exile.

The regime has shut down newspapers, radio and TV stations and frequently cuts off internet service. Now it’s confiscating satellite dishes to prevent people from viewing anything except junta-approved propaganda.

But the regime’s actions have backfired. “We have to follow the old-fashioned methods,” one activist told Myanmar Now. Student activists have started their own print journals with names like *Towards*, *The Voice of Spring* and *Molotov*.

The regime has another problem. It can’t shut everything down all the time if it hopes to keep commercial and financial relations going with the outside world. Every time it turns the internet back on, opponents of the regime use it to get out news of their struggle.

At the end of March, the military regime — apparently believing its own propaganda that the protests were dwindling — invited CNN and other big capitalist news media to visit.

Allegra Mendelson, a reporter for the *Washington Post* who was on the tour, wrote that the junta’s carefully orchestrated trip came apart when people at the

10-Mile Market in Yangon realized foreign reporters were there. Within seconds they started banging on pots and pans and holding their hands up in a three-finger salute, a symbol of defiance to the regime.

Despite the risk of being seen talking to reporters, a retired seaman approached Mendelson and said, “All Myanmar people don’t like the military coup. They want an elected government.”

He was referring to the deposed government of Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy, the bourgeois party she leads, which won last year’s election in a landslide. The generals claim the vote was fraudulent.

On April 11 and 12 thousands protested across the country, including in the southeastern region of Tanintharyi,

in the northern Jade mining area of Hpakan, in the eastern city of Loikaw and in the more central towns of Ye-U and Mogok.

The generals don’t trust the loyalty of many of the rank-and-file soldiers, made up mostly from farm families and workers from the Bamar ethnic majority. They’ve been forced to rely on notorious elite army units along with the police to attack protests.

The demonstrations are having an impact on the army, and a small number of soldiers have deserted, most recently Capt. Lin Htet Aung and several soldiers under his command. He told the press that most soldiers don’t support the repression but are too intimidated to stand up to the brass.

James Khyne in Houston contributed to this article.

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